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1854

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY,

IN

BOSTON, APRIL 26, 1854.



BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON & SON,

22, SCHOOL STREET.

1854.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

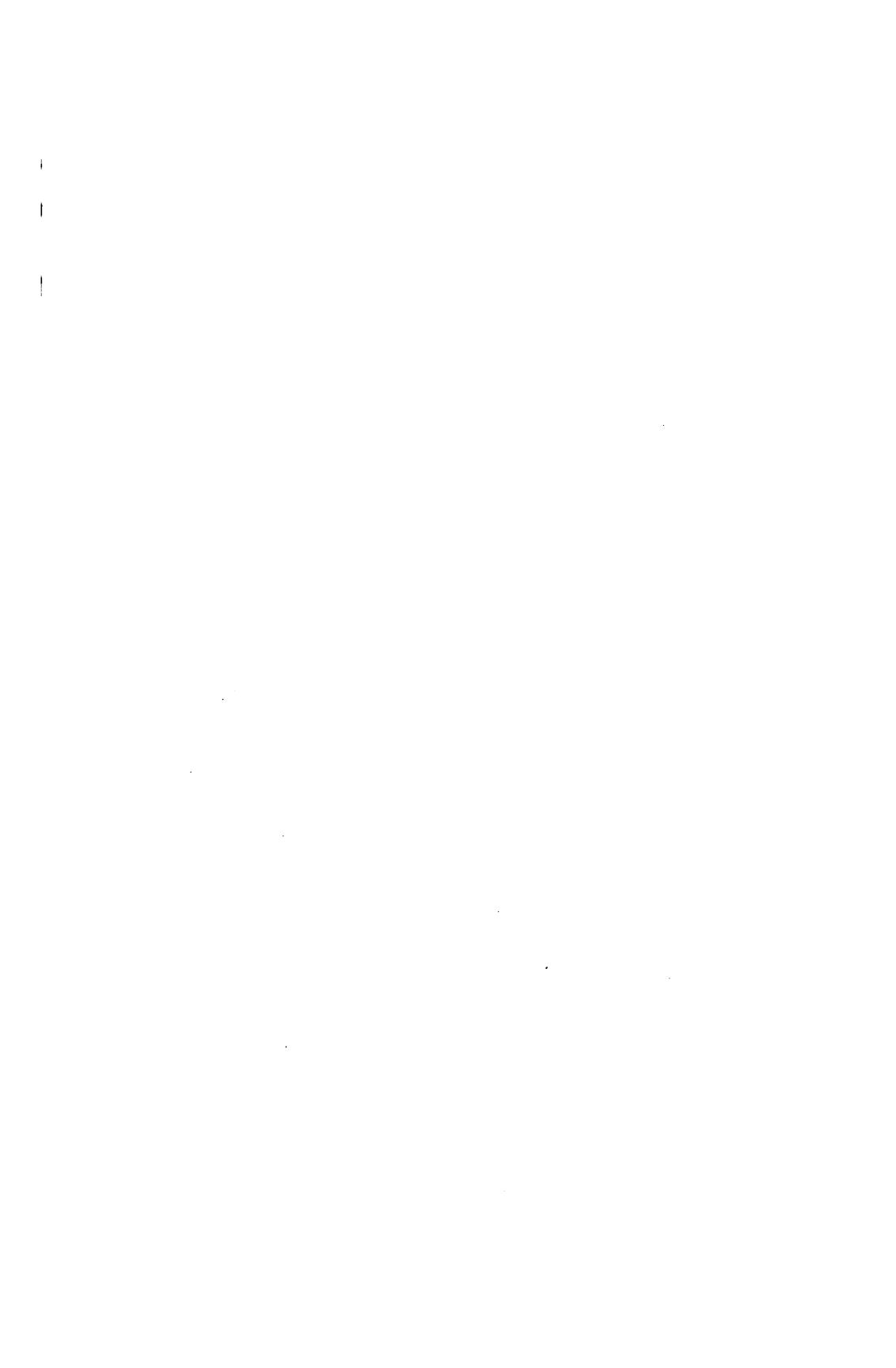
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PROCEEDINGS.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 26, 1854,

AT THE

ROOMS OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES,

IN BOSTON.

At the request of Rev. Dr. JENKS, first Vice-President, Hon. STEPHEN SALISBURY, second Vice-President, took the chair.

The records of the last meeting were read. The Report of the Council to the Society was read, with the Reports of the Treasurer and Librarian.

Voted, That the Report of the Council be accepted, and referred to the Committee of Publication, with a request that they publish such parts thereof, and in such manner, as they may think proper, with the Report of the Librarian.

Hon. ABBOTT LAWRENCE rose to request the privilege of defraying the expense of their publication.

Voted, That the thanks of the Society be rendered to Mr. Lawrence, and that his kind offer be accepted.

Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP then rose, and spoke as follows: —

I pray leave, Mr. Vice-President, to present to the Society a resolution or two, for the purpose of placing formally upon the records of this meeting the views which have been already expressed on all sides of the hall. They relate, I need not say, to our lamented President, whose death has been so fitly and feelingly announced to us in the Report of the Council.

It has been my good fortune to know Governor Davis long and well. It is twenty years this very month, since I entered his military family (as it is sometimes called) as his senior aide-de-camp, upon his first election to the office of Governor of Massachusetts. From that time to this, hardly a year has elapsed in which I have not been associated with him in some sphere or other of the public service. I have known him, for years together, in the intimacies of a Congressional mess, where all that is peculiar in private character is sure to make itself known. And it has been my privilege, too, to serve at his side in the Senate Chamber of the United States, during a brief, but crowded and momentous, period in the history of our national legislation. I desire, under these circumstances, sir, to bear my humble testimony to the many excellent and noble qualities, both of head and of heart, which distinguished him everywhere alike. No better or worthier senator, in my humble judgment,

was ever sent to the Capitol from Massachusetts, or from any other State, than John Davis; none more intelligent, more industrious, more faithful, more useful, more pure, disinterested, and patriotic.

His physical health and vigor were, it is true, not always equal to the demands which were made upon him. He had, too, a natural repugnance to every thing in the nature of ostentation or personal display. But he had a word ably and fitly and eloquently spoken for every occasion where it was called for; and he had, what is better than a whole volume of words, a quick eye, a listening ear, an attentive and thoroughly informed mind, and a punctual personal presence, for the daily and practical proceedings of Congress. No man took a more active interest, and no man exerted a more valuable influence, in regard to the real business of the country. Though born and bred in the interior of the State, and educated to the profession of the Bar, his mind seemed to have a natural facility for grappling with the difficult questions of trade and currency and tariffs, which belong more peculiarly to those who have their homes upon the sea-board, and who are personally engaged in commercial affairs. Upon questions of this sort, his opinion was often appealed to, almost as law. More than one occasion might be cited, where that opinion was deferred to implicitly, as an all-sufficient authority to govern the action of the Senate, even by those least inclined and least accustomed to waive any views of their own. The labor of the country, and the com-

merce and navigation of the country, owe him a debt which could not easily have been paid, had he lived; and which now, alas! can only be the subject of empty and formal recognition.

Above all, sir, he was a just and virtuous man, whose daily life was without spot or blemish, and whose example may be commended, without qualification, to the imitation of both young and old. As such, his name belongs to the treasures of our State and nation, and his memory can never fail to be cherished by all who appreciate the value of virtuous and Christian statesmen.

I ought to apologize, Mr. Vice-President, for having added a syllable to the able and admirable tributes to which we have just listened, in the Reports of my friend Judge Kinnicutt, and of our devoted Librarian; and I will only trespass further upon your time by submitting the following resolutions:—

Resolved, That we have learned with unfeigned sensibility and sorrow the sudden death of our distinguished and excellent President, and that this Society will ever cherish his memory with the warmest regard and respect.

Resolved, That the President's chair, in the Society's hall at Worcester, be shrouded with black until the next annual meeting; and that the Council be requested to take measures for adding a portrait of Governor Davis to the Society's gallery.

Resolved, That the thanks of the Society be presented to the Council for the admirable memoir of our lamented President which they have presented in their Report, and that they be instructed to prepare it for the press in a form in which it may have general circulation.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be communicated to the widow and family of Governor Davis, with an assurance of the sincere sympathy of the Society in their afflicting bereavement.

The Honorable ABBOTT LAWRENCE arose to second the resolutions, which, he said, would unquestionably receive an affirmative response from every member of the Society. They indeed required no advocacy from him, or any other person, to secure their passage; but he felt it due to the relations he had sustained to the deceased, of a public and private nature, that he should not permit the question to be taken until he had tendered his humble tribute to exalted virtues, the memory of which is so dear to us all.

It had been the happy privilege of the speaker to be associated with Governor Davis in bonds of social intimacy for a long series of years; he had also been connected with him in the care or arrangement of many important matters of general interest. He could say of Governor Davis, that no one could be a more true and judicious friend; no one more devoted to the faithful discharge of delegated power; no one in whose bosom glowed a more pure or ardent patriotism; no one whose moral character was more free from blemish. Governor Davis possessed extraordinary sagacity, incorruptible integrity, and industry which never flinched in the face of arduous labor. These qualities, backed by the results of close observation of men, and extensive researches in books,

enabled him to take and retain a position in our national councils which it has fallen to the lot of few men to achieve. They were qualities which even political hostility has neither depreciated nor denied, and whose beneficial effects illuminate the pages of our nation's legislative history.

Mr. Lawrence said it would be superfluous for him to specify the many and noble results of Governor Davis's public labors. They were on record, and had already been ably and eloquently set forth in the Reports which had just been laid before the Society. The good which he has done "is not interred with the bones" of the great man who has fallen: the State and the nation have been made happier and better by his life. Mr. Lawrence (of whose remarks the above is but an outline) concluded by an affecting allusion to the beauty of the character of the deceased in his domestic relations.

The following gentlemen, having been recommended by the Council for election to membership, were balloted for and chosen: —

WILLIAM S. BARTON, Esq.	Worcester.
REV. JAMES D. BUTLER	Cincinnati, Ohio.
EDWARD JARVIS, M.D.	Dorchester.
ELLIS AMES, Esq.	Canton.
HENRY STEVENS, Esq.	London, G.B.
JOEL MUNSEL, Esq.	Albany, N.Y.
JAMES LEXOX, Esq.	New York.

Voted to dissolve the meeting.

Attest,

REJOICE NEWTON,
Recording Secretary.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

By a provision of the by-laws of this Society, it is made the duty of the Council to submit a report at its annual and semi-annual meetings. The frequent recurrence of these occasions, in an association whose objects are so limited and whose progress is so quiet, necessarily precludes the accumulation of materials for extended reports of its proceedings. As each half-year passes, its members are made acquainted with its condition; and, though at the end of a series of years it will be found that much has been accomplished and recorded, the record of each meeting cannot be expected to afford a large amount of interesting matter.

The report of the Treasurer, which is herewith submitted, exhibits the condition of our finances so clearly, that it is only necessary to refer to that document for all the necessary information upon that subject.

The report of the Librarian will make known the condition of the Library, and the number and charac-

ter of the additions made to it during the last six months. It is gratifying to know, that there is, among the members and friends of the Society, a constant remembrance of its objects and wants, and a disposition to advance and supply them.

The Librarian, in his report, has called the attention of the Council to the interesting question of the origin of population upon this continent; a question which, ever since the discovery of the country by Columbus, has attracted the attention and excited the speculations of ethnological students and writers. The suggestion of collecting in our library all the works of value which have been published upon the subject is worthy of consideration, and its accomplishment would add greatly to the interest of our literary treasures.

In a former report of the Council, notice was taken of an intention to hold more frequent meetings of the Society, at which the results of the researches of its members and friends upon subjects of a historical and antiquarian character might be communicated in a manner which would give the public the advantage of listening to them. One such meeting was held in the present month, and though, on account of an inclement sky, thinly attended, gave an earnest of the pleasure and the profit to be derived from them in future, and encouragement to repeat the experiment.

Within a few days, death has again invaded our ranks. The President of this Society, the Hon. JOHN DAVIS, died at his residence in Worcester, on Wednesday, the nineteenth instant.

It would be departing from the custom of the Council, as well as doing injustice to their own feelings and the character of the deceased, if they were to close this report without a tribute to his memory.

For the last quarter of a century, the name of John Davis has been intimately associated with the councils of his native State or with those of the Union. During that period, he has borne a part in public affairs which will identify him with the history of his times, and give to him a position among the wise and patriotic statesmen of his country. Of such a one, when enrolled among our members, and holding as he did the position of our presiding officer, it is, though a sad, yet not an ungrateful duty to inscribe a brief notice upon the pages of our records, and thus to testify to our successors and to posterity the estimate which we entertain of his services and his character.

John Davis was born on the thirteenth day of January, 1787, in the town of Northborough, in the county of Worcester. Of a parentage neither affluent nor poor, it was his good fortune to feel the necessity of that personal effort and persevering industry which lie at the foundation of all success in life. Like most of the distinguished men of New England, his early training was upon his paternal farm and in the

common schools of his native town, where he acquired that hardihood of physical constitution, which, in after years, bore him through many an hour of suffering from acute disease, and, with the rudiments of education, those traits of character which contributed essentially to his success in the rough contests of his subsequent career.

After the usual preparation, a part of which was made at Leicester Academy, he entered the Freshman class of Yale College in the year 1808, and graduated in course with honor in 1812.

Having selected the law for his profession, he entered upon its study in the office of the Hon. Francis Blake of Worcester, who then stood unrivalled at the Bar of that county, and was admitted as an attorney in 1815. Just ten years from that time, in December, 1825, he took his seat in the Congress of the United States, as the representative of the Worcester South District. In that position he continued eight years, until January, 1834, when, having been elected Governor of the Commonwealth, he entered upon the duties of that office, in the discharge of which he continued until March, 1835, when he took his seat in the Senate of the United States, to which he had been elected by the Legislature then in session. He remained a member of the Senate until January, 1841, when he reassumed the office of Governor of the State, having been elected in the autumn of 1840, and continued to discharge its duties

until January, 1843, when, having been defeated in the previous Gubernatorial canvas, he remained in private life until March, 1845. In that year, upon the death of the Hon. Isaac C. Bates, then a Senator from Massachusetts, he was elected his successor by the Legislature, and continued to represent the State until the 4th of March, 1853, when, upon the expiration of his term, he finally retired to private life.

It will be seen by these dates, that he was eight years and a fraction of a year a representative in Congress, three years and a fraction Governor of the Commonwealth, and nearly fourteen years a member of the Senate of the United States; making twenty-five years, or more than half of his entire manhood, spent in the public service.

The success of Mr. Davis in his profession was remarkable. He has been known to say, that his diffidence was so great in early life, that, for years after he had acquired some reputation at the Bar, he never rose to address the court or jury without embarrassment; yet, at the end of ten years after his admission to practice, upon the elevation of Governor Lincoln to the Bench, he was the acknowledged head of his profession in a county of wide extent, and always distinguished for the ability of its Bar. As an advocate, he had few superiors in Massachusetts. Others there were more eloquent, possessed of more genius, capable of producing more thrilling effect by impassioned declamation and beautiful imagery; but

there were few, if any, possessed of more power to convince or persuade a New England jury. His imagination was always subordinate to his judgment; perhaps he had too little of the former faculty. He seldom indulged in declamation. His strength lay in the clearness of his statement, in logical arrangement, in a facility of grouping the evidence bearing upon a given point, in a sagacity that never failed him in the selection of the topics and illustrations suited to the tribunal he addressed, with which his mind was stored by extensive reading and wide observation; and, added to this, a sincerity of manner so perfect that it could not be counterfeit. It is not strange, that, with such endowments, he should be successful with a jury composed of men distinguished, as most New England juries are, for their common sense, earnest to discover the truth, and suspicious of all attempts to lead their judgment astray by appeals to their feelings or imagination.

As a lawyer, Mr. Davis was not remarkable for extensive reading. In this, his maxim was, "*Multum, non multa.*" His mind was well stored with legal principles, and he seldom failed of making a just application of them in practice. His arguments addressed to the court were always characterized by this habit of his mind; and, though he never permitted himself to be surprised by the citation of cases which he had not seen, he relied more upon well-settled principles, and the deductions logically made from

them by his own mind, than by the citation of any number of analogous authorities. He was always listened to by the court with attention, as one who had something to say, and from whom something might be learned, a fact which means something more than a compliment in the Supreme Court of Massachusetts.

But it was as a statesman that Governor Davis was most distinguished, and upon his character in this capacity will rest his chief claim to an enduring reputation. He had not long been a member of the House of Representatives before he became distinguished. The system of protection to American industry was then just assuming a decided character, and he at once gave to it the aid of his intellect, his industry, and experience. His opinions upon all questions connected with it were highly respected; and it was in no small degree under his auspices, as a leader in the House, that the system was finally perfected. In the contests growing out of this policy, he encountered the most distinguished of its opponents in that body, and, in the opinion of its friends at least, achieved a decided triumph. When it is remembered that Mr. McDuffie of South Carolina was then the leading supporter of the opposite side of the question, this is no light distinction. The weapons which win success in such a warfare must have no ordinary temper, and be wielded with no want of strength or skill.

It was in the latter part of his service in the House, that South Carolina took her position on the subject

of a practical nullification of the tariff laws, in the enactment of which he had taken so conspicuous a part; and that the integrity of the Union was directly and imminently threatened. It will be recollected by many with what equanimity and firmness he bore himself through all that trying period, yielding to no unmanly fears, but possessing his spirit calmly in the conviction of a just cause, and reassuring others by his confidence in the strength of the constitution to carry itself safely through the crisis.

Upon his elevation to the Senate, he entered upon an arena in which it was still more difficult to acquire and sustain a reputation of a high order; for there, in addition to a host of other able men, stood, in the full strength of their manhood, with every muscle and sinew and nerve in vigorous action, that great trio of intellectual champions, around whose contests of almost superhuman power already tradition is casting the halo of an heroic age. It is not, of course, in a comparison with these, in their peculiar characteristics, that Governor Davis is to find his true position as a debater or a statesman. The matchless manner and the "voice divine" of Henry Clay never yet fell to other mortal lot. Mr. Calhoun's remorseless logic and metaphysical skill were pre-eminently his own. And Mr. Webster's grasp of intellect and sublime imagination were as unequalled as the brow which foreshadowed them. Into this arena, Governor Davis brought that admirable temper, that sagacity, that

dispassionate wisdom, which had distinguished him in the House, and which had now culminated to their zenith ; and he soon took a rank, which never deserted him, among the wisest and most able members of that remarkable body.

There he renewed his efforts in support of the protection of American industry, and for many years defended the policy whenever it needed defence. His speech in 1840, in reply to Mr. Buchanan of Pennsylvania, will be remembered as one of his most successful efforts, and as having had probably more influence among the masses, in the unparalleled political contest of that year, than any other document that issued from the press.

For many years he was the Chairman of the Committee on Commerce in the Senate ; and, though the duties of that Committee were foreign from his early pursuits and studies, he applied himself to the discharge of them with such energy and devotion, that he soon mastered the principles and details of the subjects referred to him. As a branch of commerce, his attention was early attracted to the fisheries, in which his own constituents were largely and successfully engaged ; a department of industry, which, whether we consider its importance to the national wealth and national defence, or the fearless hardihood with which it is pursued in every climate and sea, justifies the magnificent and prophetic eulogium of Burke, who saw in it the promise of the future great-

ness of a people then but in the "gristle of manhood." The prophecy has become history; and however some may have been disposed to disparage this element of national prosperity and honor, Mr. Davis claimed for it the fostering care and protection of the government, and on all occasions gave to the brave mariners employed in it his steadfast support. Many a bold seaman, as he pursued his prey on the stormy banks of Newfoundland, amid the icebergs of the polar sea, or beneath the burning sun of the torrid zone, has had reason to bless the vigilant care of the fearless senator, who never forgot or failed him when his rights needed a defender.

When he left the chair of the Committee on Commerce, it was admitted by common consent, that it had never been filled with more fidelity, or with greater usefulness to the country. One of his last labors as a member of the Senate was the framing and perfecting a bill for the regulation of steam navigation, with the object of diminishing the immense hazard to life with which it had been attended; and, though opposed by adverse interests, and thwarted by all the arts of which parliamentary skill is master, he succeeded in establishing a code of regulations whose beneficial effects have already been widely felt, and which is destined in the future, in no small degree, to ensure safety in the use of that fearful power which we have harnessed to our commerce, and have hitherto left almost without control.

But it was not to such special subjects as the tariff and commerce, large though they are, and comprehensive enough to monopolize the labors of a life, that he limited his attention. His was a mind which could not content itself with specialties, however useful or absorbing. He surveyed the whole map of statesmanship, and was satisfied to leave no part of it unexplored. The principles of international law, of diplomatic intercourse, of constitutional law as applied to the States and the general government, and the conflicts between them, our systems of finance and public domain, our foreign and our domestic relations, the great questions of peace and war, of international duties and international rights; — all these, and many more, he made his study; and upon them all, whoever has read the debates of the Senate through the period of his membership, during which all of them have been discussed, and still more those who have enjoyed the privilege of his conversation, must have been impressed with the great extent of his knowledge, the comprehensiveness of his intellectual vision, and the high character of his practical wisdom.

On the agitating questions of a domestic character which have been discussed during his connection with the Senate, while he steadily maintained the rights and defended the interests of the North, Mr. Davis was always ready to do justice to the South. With him her constitutional rights were sacred; for to the constitution he acknowledged no divided allegiance.

Whatever provisions were found clearly set down in that instrument were fundamental articles in his political creed. He never complained of them or attempted to evade them. He was accustomed to take enlarged views of the various and diversified interests of the country, as forming in combination the strength of a great and united empire, destined in its integrity to advance the civilization of the world beyond any experience in its history, and by its dissolution, if dissolved it should be, to retard it by fearful and undefined perils and disasters. He regarded the union of the States, therefore, as a priceless blessing, to be maintained only by a faithful adherence to the compromises of the constitution. But, while he was ever ready to respect the rights of other sections of the Union, he firmly insisted upon those of his own; and upon all questions on which he was to act, involving either, he claimed, what he freely conceded to others, the right to be guided by his own independent judgment. This he followed, on more than one occasion, with a fearlessness which dared to obey conscience and duty, regardless of personal hazard or popular reproach.

On the subject of international relations and duties, Mr. Davis held sacred the obligation of treaties, and the still higher obligation of dealing justly, under all circumstances, with other nations, whether bound by treaties or not. His mind revolted from all attempts to wrest from the weak their rights or their territory,

either by encouraging lawless individual enterprises, or by seeking occasions to involve them in national quarrels. The doctrine of a manifest destiny, in accordance with which we are to extend our republican empire, by right or by wrong, over the whole continent, found no lodgment in his mind. He adhered to that safer, that more benignant policy, which seeks to cultivate, to civilize, and adorn the vast empire which we already possess, rather than that which covets new provinces at the expense of national honor, and it may be of national security.

In regard to the question of intervention in European politics, which so much excited the country during the visit of that extraordinary and erratic genius, the distinguished Hungarian exile, he quietly reposed upon the great doctrine of the father of his country, and lived to see the storm of popular enthusiasm subside into the calm of a conservative public opinion ; a result for which, in the closing days of his life, in view of the events transpiring upon the continent of Europe, he had reason to be grateful, as a lover of the peace and prosperity of his country.

Neither the limited time for the preparation of this notice, nor the occasion itself, admits of an extended review of Mr. Davis's opinions upon subjects of public policy, or of greater detail in regard to his senatorial career. His personal influence in that body, during the latter part of his connection with it, and up to the hour he left it, was probably unsurpassed by that of

any other member. The sober thoughtfulness and spotless integrity of his life, his freedom from extravagance of manner or expression, his extensive and accurate information on subjects the most diverse, his ability to grapple with and master both principles and details, his readiness to impart knowledge, his long experience in public affairs, his reputation for solid judgment, his wisdom in council and firmness in time of trial, united to give him a position in the Senate, which any who sat there might well be content to occupy. It may safely be said of him, that few men have at any time belonged to that august body who have possessed greater capacity for the service of the country, few who have exerted their talents with more fidelity, and fewer still who have accomplished more beneficial results.

When Governor Davis was first elected to the office of Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth, he had never been connected with the State Government. His public life had been confined to Congress, as the representative of his district. His reputation acquired there was the basis of his popularity at home. Succeeding one of the most popular and efficient chief magistrates the State had ever had, the post was a difficult one to fill, without suffering by the comparison which would be sure to be instituted. It is praise enough to say of him, that he filled it without a diminution in the amount of public regard which his predecessor had won. He remained in the office of

Governor at this time but little more than a year, when he was transferred to the Senate. His selection a second time as the candidate of his party for the executive office was in 1840, when the political control of the State had passed into the hands of its opponents, and when it was deemed necessary to put in nomination the strongest man in the popular favor whom the party possessed within its ranks. There was no doubt in the minds of any who that man was ; and the result, in his election by a popular majority of nearly twenty thousand votes, showed the wisdom of the selection. His executive administrations were characterized by a careful and conscientious attention to every department of duty, by a strict regard to the constitutional limitations upon his authority, by a jealous guardianship of the rights of the State in her relations with the General Government and her sister States, and by a watchful concern in all her industrial interests, in her educational system, and her charitable institutions.

But the executive department of government was not that which was best suited to his tastes, or the character of his mind. He liked better the larger questions and broader field of contemplation opened to the statesman in the national legislature, and he returned to the Senate with no wish again to assume the responsibilities and duties of executive station. Here he remained until within little more than a year of his death, when he returned to his home, with

the intention of never again leaving it for public life. And there, his labors ended, and his work all done, he died, —

“ Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.”

Massachusetts mourns his death as a public loss. Well she may. She never had a wiser, a more faithful, or a more useful statesman. Long will she hold his services in grateful remembrance. Numerous as have been her distinguished men, and proud as she has reason to be of the long line of patriots who have illustrated her annals and adorned her councils, none have left to her the legacy of a nobler or a purer public life.

Distinguished as Governor Davis was in public, it was in the relations of private life that the true worth of his character was best known and appreciated. Unostentatious in his manners, simple to a remarkable degree in his tastes, steadfast in his integrity under all circumstances, easy to be approached by the humble, always ready to listen to the weak and the friendless, stern and uncompromising in his resistance to wrong, social in his habits, genial in his disposition, and constant in his friendships, he was peculiarly fitted to adorn a private station, and to make happy the narrow circle of home and neighborhood and friends. These genial and agreeable qualities accompanied him in his intercourse with public

men ; and, above all, his allegiance to truth followed him wherever he went, and whatever he did. In private and in public life, the “*incorrupta fides*” of the man and the statesman never deserted him. It was the pole-star of his life, and, like the “*in hoc vince*” of Constantine, always flamed on the sky before him.

Governor Davis was a man of large reading, and of wide and minute observation. His knowledge was extensive and various. It was difficult to suggest a subject on which something could not be learned from him. He had devoted much time to the reading of history, both ancient and modern ; and few persons were so thoroughly instructed in the details of our own colonial and national history. In the later years of his life, he resumed the reading of ancient classic authors, among whom Cæsar, Tacitus, and Livy accorded best with his tastes.

In conversation he possessed remarkable power. Few men equalled him as a talker. His resources seemed to be never-failing. It was delightful to listen to him, as he sat in his own house, surrounded by his friends, pouring forth instruction by the hour, from lips that never tired, and from a mind never exhausted of its treasures, upon themes of the most varied character, social, political, historical, moral, — rising from those of ordinary interest, up to those which deal with the highest questions of human life and human destiny. Had Governor Davis's lot been cast in a different sphere, had he occupied the chair of history or

moral philosophy in a university, there can be little doubt that he would have achieved a fame as honorable, if not as distinguished, as that which crowned his political career.

Though deeply engrossed with the cares and duties of political station, he yet found time to interest himself in those benevolent enterprises which have for their object the improvement of the world in civilization, in morals, and religion. In the proceedings of the American Bible Society he felt a warm interest, and consented for a number of years to act as the President of the Worcester County Auxiliary Bible Society, in which capacity he afforded efficient aid to the parent association. Penetrated himself with a conviction of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and of the truth of the great and beneficent doctrines of the Christian religion, he regarded their circulation, in every tongue and in every land, as the means of the moral elevation, and the general and permanent civilization of the human race.

Of the interest which he felt in this institution, and the attention which he devoted to its concerns, the reports of the council from year to year will testify. As its friend and constant benefactor, he bestowed upon it many and valuable favors; and, as its President, he conferred upon it honor, and devoted to it the last services of his life.

But it is time to bring this notice to a close. Again we are reminded by this event of the fearful

havoc which death has made among us within the last three years, —

“ The great are falling from us ; ”

Calhoun, Clay, Webster, — all within so short a space, that, as each departed, he seems to have been calling to the next to follow him. And now Davis has joined them, may we not believe, to unite with their spirits in that higher council, around the throne of the Most High.

For the Council,

THOS. KINNICUTT.

REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN.

THE list of accessions, since the 23d of October last, shows an increase of one hundred and forty-three volumes of books, and five hundred and fifty-seven pamphlets.

Most of these are donations: some, however, are the result of exchanges or of direct purchase. They have been received from the sources designated in the list that accompanies this report.

The largest donation, in point of numbers, is that of F. W. Paine, Esq., consisting of twenty-nine volumes and three hundred and ten pamphlets; besides some files of illustrated papers, and some engravings of sketches by Michael Angelo.

The largest in quantity is the accumulation of unbound newspapers from Hon. John Davis, who has also contributed to other classes of additions.

A series of valuable files of the Boston Advertiser, from Hon. Nathan Hale, with a copy of his map of New England, should also be mentioned in this connection.

Among the more *curious* donations are two volumes, elephant folio, of views of places, edifices, and scenery in Savoy, published in 1682, from George Brinley, Esq., of Hartford; and a gift from John C. B. Davis, Esq., of New York, consisting of *Opera Omnia* of Virgil, printed at Venice by Bartolomæus, in 1486, in fine condition, from the library of the late Duke of Sussex; two volumes of Boissard's *Rome*, with De Bry's cuts; Woolrych's *Life of Lord Coke*, with an original warrant signed by Coke as Attorney-General; and one of the thirty presentation copies of Lord Brougham's speech on Law Reform, sent by the author, with his autograph, to the Earl of Rosslyn.

A set of Kippis's edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, in five volumes, folio, was presented by Hon. Thomas Kinnicutt.

Most of the Council have had an opportunity to examine the various donations and other accessions, as they have been laid before them from time to time. A detailed enumeration of all these would occupy too much space in a report, as it would form a considerable catalogue of titles in itself.

Much disappointment has been experienced by the non-arrival of certain cases of books, ordered in London, by Hon. Stephen Salisbury, for this Society.

According to a notice from Mr. Henry Stevens, through whose agency the purchases were to be made, a large case of valuable works should have been forwarded in September last. No advices have since

been received; and it is inferred that the case alluded to, and others whose subsequent arrival was anticipated, have been for some reason detained.

As the books to be collected by Mr. Stephens were mainly of a specific character, belonging to a department of the library in which Mr. Salisbury has taken a particular interest, it is possible that some difficulty has been experienced in filling his orders.

In a library like that of this Society, whose object is not a popular one, at least in its primary purpose, but rather to aid in the prosecution of particular researches, it is important that classes of subjects should be rendered as complete as possible; and the classes most imperatively demanding an effort to that end are those which would naturally be sought for in an antiquarian institution.

Historical publications of a *local nature* belong to a class which it is exceedingly desirable to perfect. As the circulation of such works is apt to be confined to the neighborhood where alone they are supposed to be of interest, they are not to be found in any particular market, and must of necessity be gathered incidentally, as opportunities occur.

Legislative documents, and political and statistical pamphlets, are much required in a library of reference for historical purposes.

There is also a class of publications peculiarly apposite to the collections of a Society calling itself *Antiquarian*, to which the attention of the Council is

requested, as worthy of exciting some special exertions in its behalf. The works referred to are those that treat of the origin of population in this country. . A fruitful theme for speculation during the two centuries succeeding the discovery by Columbus, it has not yet ceased to employ ingenious minds in the effort to detect, and arrange into plausible hypotheses, the traces of a knowledge of this continent by the ancients.

Such theories have fallen into some disrepute of late years, in consequence of the absurdities those who adopted them were often led into by attempting to prove too much, and also by the manner in which facts were warped and colored for their support. We have had experience that the character of the aboriginal remains at the West has been often misconceived and misrepresented, in the endeavor to account for them by the supposition that they were the work of an offshoot from some European or Asiatic nation, more or less civilized. Even the coolest and keenest observers have been misled by superficial resemblances, which they had no opportunity of testing by careful investigation. The first volume of the transactions of this Society contains many suggestions that are now justly regarded as crude and indefensible. De Witt Clinton expressed his belief that the old forts in New York were of a Danish character, founded probably on the opinion then prevalent, but now considered erroneous, that the similar enclosures in Great Britain

were made by the Danes. Whereupon the learned Dr. Mitchell exclaims (in a communication to this Society), — “In the twinkling of an eye, I was penetrated by the justness of his remark. An additional window of light was suddenly opened to me. I could follow the European emigrants, during the horrible commotions of the ninth and tenth centuries, to Iceland. I thought I could trace the people of Scandinavia to the banks of the St. Lawrence. Madoc, Prince of Wales, and his Cambrian followers, appeared to my recollection among these bands of adventurers, &c.” It has since been well ascertained that the works referred to by Clinton were constructed by the natives, some of them possessing no great antiquity.

The earlier discussions respecting those remains in this country, the mystery of whose origin and use has not yet been fully elucidated, are marked throughout by similar hasty conclusions, drawn from apparent analogies, and lapsing into what to us seem as wild and visionary lucubrations. There is hardly a nation or race of the old world to which some of our aboriginal relics have not been attributed.

The study and comparison of native languages, more especially the labors of Mr. Gallatin in that field of inquiry, — and the physiological investigations of Dr. Morton, sustained by Agassiz and other men of science, — added to a more accurate survey of the vestiges of ancient population, have given a new direction to public opinion. The sentiment is beginning

to prevail, that the inhabitants of both American continents, the Esquimaux excepted, are of one original race, of great antiquity, and not materially affected, if at all, by foreign admixture. This view is in accordance with the belief of those who doubt the unity of mankind, and receive the doctrine of distinct creations of varieties adapted to different regions and climates, or possessing fundamental characteristics peculiar to themselves. It is not, however, necessarily inconsistent with the theory of a common parentage, and only carries back the introduction of human life upon our soil to a remoter period.

But, although the whole aspect of the question is essentially modified by these conclusions, the facts on which former discussions were based remain undisposed of. The possibility, the probability, and the actuality, of intercourse with the Eastern world, before the ocean was crossed by Columbus, continue to be, and are likely to continue, important topics of argument and research.

When we consider how much has already been written on the subject, we may well imagine that the materials of discussion, and the modes of presenting them in various processes of reasoning, have been exhausted. But opinions are always liable to be reproduced under new lights, if not in new forms; and modern discoveries do not always refute, but sometimes strengthen and illustrate, ancient assertions or hypotheses. Even those who maintain the unity and

independent origin of the American race admit, that European and Asiatic vessels may sometimes have been driven by storms or borne by ocean-currents to these shores. The wreck of a Japanese junk on the coast of Oregon, in 1833, is a well-known instance of such an occurrence. There is also a tendency to a higher estimate of the maritime capacity, enterprise, and knowledge of the earth, of early ages, than has generally prevailed. The prophecy of Seneca, that the ocean would ultimately relax its bounds, and disclose a new continent, may be regarded as a natural suggestion of a poet's fancy, rather than a wandering beam of traditional light, accidentally caught and transmitted. The notion that America is the continent vaguely described as lying beyond the Atlantis of Plato, and the supposition that Mexico is the Ophir to which the Tyrian ships employed by Solomon sailed in their three years' voyage, may not be thought entitled to serious consideration. But the stories derived from the lore of the Egyptian priesthood, and referred to by Herodotus, Plato, Pliny, &c., are not always to be regarded as only myths or fables. Nor are the accounts of the old geographers and voyagers, of distant and marvellous maritime expeditions, to be summarily dismissed as fictions, unless a more rigid incredulity than the learning and experience of our great cosmopolitan philosopher, Humboldt, sanctions, is deemed proper. Contrary to the opinion of various distinguished writers on the

geography of the ancients, who are quoted in the appendix to Irving's Life of Columbus, Humboldt expresses his belief that the Carthaginians sailed around Africa. Moreover he says, "The many indications that have come down to us from antiquity, and a careful consideration of the relations of geographical proximity to ancient undoubted settlements on the African shore, lead me to believe that the Canary Islands were known to the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans, perhaps even to the Etruscans." A similar liberality of criticism might, without any great stretch of probabilities, extend their knowledge to the Cape Verd's, which others suppose them to have visited ; and, from our acquaintance with the courses of winds and currents, it would seem very likely to happen, that vessels should sometimes be driven across the space intervening between those localities and the American continent. It was thus that Brazil was accidentally discovered by Cabrera, in 1500, on a voyage from Portugal to the East Indies, around the Cape of Good Hope.

If, after the unsuccessful efforts of Raleigh to effect a settlement in Carolina, and the annihilation of his little colony, a long interval of time had elapsed without subsequent communication, it is by no means certain that any vestiges of that enterprise would exist here ; and, at an early period of the world, its history, if preserved, would have been obscure and mythical. If transmitted in the traditions of the aborigines, the

account might have been as vague and unsatisfactory as any that have been received from a similar source concerning the arrival of strangers in the uncertain times of their ancestors.

The ante-Columbian expedition of the Welsh under Madoc, and the narrative of the Zeni, derived from the Frizeland fisherman, and their voyage in search of the land described by him, are still mooted questions; while the Scandinavian claims to discovery are considered to be sustained by authentic documents. Yet it remains to be determined how far down the shores of the United States the Northmen explored, as well as to ascertain the position and duration of their settlements.

The actual fact of their voyages to America is admitted to stand on historical ground, and to be confirmed by internal evidence in the records themselves, although the existence here of monuments of their residence is by no means uncontroverted. But there is a circumstance, pregnant with suggestions for speculation, connected with these narratives, and partaking somewhat of their claims to authenticity. According to the testimony of the Sagas, the Skrelinger, or Esquimaux, related to the Northmen settled in Vinland, that, further southward, beyond the Chesapeake Bay, there dwelt white men, who clothed themselves in long white garments, carried poles before them to which cloths were attached, and called with a loud voice; which was interpreted by the Northmen to

indicate processions, in which banners were borne, accompanied by singing. In the oldest Sagas, the southern coasts, between Virginia and Florida, are designated as the Land of the Whiteman. They are called "Irland it mikler" (Great Ireland), and it is maintained that they were peopled by the Irish. It is even stated, that, before Leif discovered Vinland, and probably about the year 982, an Icelandic chief, named Ari Marsson, was driven by storms, in a voyage from Iceland, to the "Land of the Whiteman," and there baptized in the Christian faith; and, being detained, was afterwards recognized by men from the Orkneys and Iceland.

It is unnecessary to mention the numerous stories that have been told of Celtic words and phrases detected among some tribes of Indians, and of Hebrew customs, idioms, and expressions, that have been so much dwelt upon in times past. The probability that the lost tribes of Israel found refuge in America has been more elaborately argued by the learned of former times, and more generally credited in this country, than any other hypothesis of the origin of its inhabitants. Receiving an impulse, of a character almost official, from the treatise of the celebrated Rabbi Ben Israel in 1650, it became a favorite idea with Mayhew, Eliot, the Mathers, and other missionaries and scholars of their times; and, at a later period, has been maintained with undoubting faith, and great labor

and ingenuity, by Adair, Boudinot, Ethan Smith, Mordecai Manasseh Noah, Mrs. St. Simon, &c. &c.

The repetition of ancient theories by modern writers is a circumstance not to be disregarded by archæologists, however unsound the theories themselves may seem to be. In a pompous but not unlearned work, published in 1843 by George Jones, R.S.I.: M.S.V. &c., and dedicated, by permission, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the colonization of this country by the Tyrians is maintained, and the old notion of the migration of St. Thomas is re-asserted. In the work on Peruvian antiquities by Rivero and Von Tschudi, recently translated by Dr. Hawks, not only is the Scandinavian tale of white men (Irish) established in the Carolinas, and perhaps in Florida, who had *horses*, admitted as a *certainty*, but various of the more antiquated speculations, connecting the old world with the new, are noticed as entitled to confidence; and the translator states that the hypothesis of a Phœnician origin for that body of settlers who peopled Guatemala and the adjacent regions, ingeniously and learnedly supported by De Laet, has, within the last two or three years, been invested with fresh interest by the new discoveries of the Abbé de Bourbourg, whose work is said to be in the press in Paris.

There are at least three inscribed stones found in our own territories, which learned men have pronounced to contain alphabetical characters. That which first attracted attention, the *Dighton rock*,

has of late been deprived of a portion of its mystery by comparison with analogous sculptures known to be the work of the aborigines. Yet Mr. Schoolcraft is disposed to believe, that Runic letters occupy the centre of the figures, around which the natives have drawn their own symbols. Another stone is mentioned by Kalm, the Swedish traveller, as discovered, some years previous to his visit to Canada in 1749, by Verandrier, about nine hundred French miles west of Montreal. It was a French foot in length, and four or five inches broad, found fixed in a large stone or pillar, and covered on both sides with characters, which the Jesuit priests declared to be identical in form with those contained in books as copied from Tartarian monuments. He says it was sent to France, to the Secretary of State, Count de Maurepas, and was supposed to be preserved in his collections. It would be a point of interest to determine whether the stone is still in existence. The third is the much-controverted inscription said to have been among the remains excavated from the great mound at Grave Creek. This was submitted to Jomard, the French antiquary, who communicated a paper respecting it to the Geographical Society of Paris, and decided that the characters resembled those of the Lybian monuments on the Mediterranean coast of Africa.

The purpose of these allusions to some of the modes in which it is claimed that America was, or may have been, visited at remote dates, and the evidence

of such visits by different people, is to show that the question is still an open one, fertile in the elements of controversy, and one that this Society may be expected at some time to make the subject of serious consideration and deliberate judgment. Whether Egyptians, Carthaginians, Tyrians, Greeks, Romans, Ethiopians, Etruscans, Canaanites, Jews, Chinese, Tartars, Huns, Welsh, Irish, Scandinavians, &c., any, or all of them, found their way hither, by chance or design, is at any rate an inquiry upon which has been expended a great amount of learning and ability, worthy to be collected and preserved.

However barren of trustworthy indications our Eastern shores have proved, the Western coasts of this continent are yet comparatively unexplored. What traces of foreign occupancy may be developed there, remains to be seen. The native traditions of all sections of the country, and the Mexican manuscripts, are supposed to point uncontroversially to an emigration from the North-west; and, if an Asiatic origin for the entire population of the country be opposed by philological and physiological facts, as not possible within any period admitting the existence of evidence, we know not how many cases have occurred, like that of the Japanese vessel in 1833, in which accidental and involuntary emigration has taken place from the mainland or islands of Asia. These may have resulted in temporary residence, succeeded by extermination from the savage inhabitants; and

they may have planted the seeds of semi-civilization, traceable, through the regions west of the Rocky Mountains, to its culmination in Mexico and Peru.

The facilities of access from Asia are certainly greater than those from Europe. The same winds that bore the Japanese junk to the neighborhood of Columbia River could have carried thither the fleet of Kublai Khan, described by Marco Paulo as having disappeared in a mysterious manner on a voyage of conquest against Japan, and believed by many writers to have been driven to this continent.

It is curious to note in what various connections the old theories of emigration are revived. In "Lares and Penates, or Cilicia and its Governors," by William Buckhardt Barker, printed last year, is an account of ancient sculptured and terra-cotta images, disinterred in that country, whose profiles are identical with those strange human outlines on the monuments and edifices of Central America. The hypothesis is immediately started that they are faithful and correct likenesses of the Huns, not the progenitors of the modern Hungarians, but the ugly race whose inhuman faces and horse-like heads so terrified the inhabitants of the Southern countries; one division of whose tribes went westward, sweeping all before it, as far as China, and against whose intrusions the great wall of that kingdom was built. Thence they are supposed to have crossed to America, and to have left their portraits on monuments here.

Thus the old subject of ante-Columbian communication with this continent may be said still to lie on the table before the scientific world, liable to be called up at any time for renewed discussion. As the great seats of primitive archaeology, from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, are laid open to investigation, a consummation to which events seem rapidly tending, and as the regions bordering upon our side of the Western Ocean are explored, -a result whose fulfilment is not less speedily promised, — the question of early intercourse may assume an aspect of increased interest and more positive certainty.

It would be pleasant to be able to say to inquirers who visit our library for that kind of information, that we possess the most important works in which such researches have been embodied. The object is a definite one, whose limits are susceptible of distinct comprehension; and its accomplishment would involve no formidable amount of labor or expense. The books themselves, antiquated as many of them are, can hardly yet be classed among costly rarities; and it is probable that members of the Society, having their attention directed to the matter, would find themselves able to contribute materials easily spared from their own libraries, or to point out other available sources of supply. Our collections are already by no means scanty in this particular, and the deficiencies are to be regarded rather as gaps to be filled than as absolute vacancies. Amid the efforts everywhere

making, with liberal resources, for the establishment and growth of general libraries, it is by means of such perfected specialities only that our own can be expected to maintain either distinction or prominent utility; and no speciality can present more forcible claims to the consideration of this institution than that which has been suggested.

It was at the moment of concluding this report that the sad intelligence was received of the sudden death of our President. It happens that the principal subject here considered was one in which he felt a more than ordinary interest.

If his public occupations left him little leisure for researches that would be termed antiquarian in a technical sense, he found time to indulge a decided taste for ethnological and geographical studies. His minute observation and accurate memory of localities, were prominent among his intellectual traits; and the peculiar characteristics of a region of country, and of its inhabitants, were vividly impressed on his mind. He took great pleasure in collecting for our library the topographical and geological reports, the maps, charts, and surveys, and the narratives of exploring expeditions, rendered to Congress. His remarks in private conversation evinced how carefully he was accustomed to examine these, not only as a statesman, with reference to the economical resources of the country, but in regard to their bearing upon the objects of anti-

quarian and ethnological science. His strong powers of analysis and discrimination enabled him to deduce sound and practical conclusions from any array of facts; and those of an historical nature, relating to remote and uncertain periods of time, when brought to his notice, were sure to receive a sagacious interpretation.

It may be permitted to record here the testimony of your Librarian to the fact, that, in the now considerable period during which he has himself been connected with this Institution, Governor Davis has always been an unostentatious but efficient promoter of its purposes and interests, quietly making himself acquainted with its wants, watching over its proceedings, and contributing to its progress. A private expression of sorrow may also be indulged for the loss of an instructive adviser and cordial friend.

S. F. HAVEN, *Librarian.*

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